

From: gamecuber13
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/27/02 6:11pm
Subject: Microsoft Case

Justice Department-

Regarding the decision on the Microsoft Case, I have some input which I hope will be of use to you in your final verdict. In my opinion, I believe that Microsoft should not be able to make a settlement in the case, by creating a monopoly, Microsoft is not only being an unfair business, but it is also, at the same time hurting the economy. By driving other companies to bankruptcy, the stock market is damaged overall since all the people who own the stocks of these companies lose their money and only the individuals who own Microsoft stocks benefit. Microsoft's strategy for beating other businesses is unfair as well. Microsoft has bundled their browser, Internet Explorer, with the computers sold by companies such as Dell, Gateway, and IBM. Therefore, the predominant operating system in use is Internet Explorer, proving the bundling scheme as an unfair advantage. Microsoft's strategy is similar to that of Industrial big businesses from the past in American History. J. Piermont Morgan owned one such of these monopolies. He was completely in Control of the Railroad and Iron businesses and came to acquire the Shipping industry as well. The main plan of companies owned by people like Morgan, Rockefeller and Carnegie was unfair. They would offer companies in other areas where their products were not the majority a small amount of shares (worth less than their company's value) for them to give over their business to the monopolies. If these companies refused, the monopolistic companies would reduce their prices in the particular area where these products were sold and sell their products there for cheaper than it costed to make them; this was not a great loss because the monopolies were so rich that they could afford to do so. Using this method, they would drive other smaller and weaker companies out of business. This strategy is similar to Microsoft's. Theodore Dressier wrote an excellent novel, "The Financier", which describes monopolies and big business overpowering weaker and smaller businesses. One excerpt from "The Financier" concerns a short tale about a lobster and a squid. Both are placed in a tank. The squid is placed in as prey for the more powerful and armed lobster. The lobster, symbolic of the big businesses and monopolies, well armed with its pincers, is perfectly capable of destroying the squid, which represents smaller businesses which have no way to survive against more powerful business. In the story, the author tells of how the Lobster would daily try to capture the squid and the squid would always escape, but part of it would get cut off by the lobster. Then, finally, one day, the lobster catches the squids. From this experience, the narrator tells us of a conclusion he draws, "Things lived on each other-that was it. Lobsters lived on squids and other things. What lived on lobsters?" Dressier describes how powerful big businesses are. This method is nearly identical to Microsoft's ruthless actions toward other companies. To make Microsoft atone for its misdemeanors, I would suggest breaking the company apart into smaller companies. Another option would be to force Microsoft to stop bundling their computer software with computer hardware. I hope that my opinion has helped in your arriving at a decision in this case.

A Student Citizen,

Vikram Srinivasan